(b) and (c) As per the Survey of Causes of Death (Rural) conducted by the office of the Registrar General of India, the contribution of deaths due to pregnancy, childbirth and puerperium to overall deaths has declined from 0.9 percent in 1994. to 0.6 percent in 1998. Information for subsequent years is not available.

Improvement in working of PHCs

2295. PROF. M.M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any proposal to improve the functioning of Primary Health Centres in the rural areas of the country; and

(b) if so, the details of the programmes and schemes formulated for this purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) and (b) Primary Health Centres (PHCs) are established and maintained by the respective State government from out of their own resources under the State's health sector outlay. However, the Government supplements the efforts of the States to strengthen Health Care services with the following interventions:

(i) Under the State Health Systems Project, the primary health care infrastructure is being upgraded to provide quality health services to people in rural and backward areas.

(ii) Under the Pradhan Mantri Gramodaya Yojana, specific funds are allocated towards the repair and renovation of the public health infrastructure, purchase of drugs and essential consumables, and for contingencies.

(iii) Area Development Proejcts are being implemented with financial assistance from external agencies for addressing gaps in integrated service delivery through the construction of buildings for sub-centres, primary health centres, and community health centres.

(iv) Under the Major Civil Works component of the Reproductive and

Child Health Programme, funds are provided for the construction/ repair/maintenance of operation theatres and labour rooms, and for upgradation of water and electric supply in the primary health care institutions.

AIDS virus testing facility in blood banks

2296. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether all the blood banks in the country have been directed to procure blood only after establishing it as free from AIDS virus;

(b) if so, whether every blood bank is fully equipped to test AIDS virus; and

(c) if not, the steps Government propose to take so that a large number of patients are not affected through HIV positive blood transfusion?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI A. RAJA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Provisions of the Drugs and Cosmetics Rules clearly direct that every unit of blood in the blood bank is tested for HIV infection, and only HIV sero-negative blood is issued for purposes of blood transfusion and/or for any other uses. To ensure this, every blood bank is equipped with HIV test kits or then further linked to a larger blood bank, where these facilities are available.

Home remedies kit scheme

2297. SHRI THANGA TAMIL SELVAN: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether "Home Remedies Kit" scheme has been launched/ proposed to be launched;

(b) if so, the details of the scheme and the States covered under the scheme; and

(c) the details/worth of the Kits given to each family?